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NEWS AND NOTES

Dr. C. E. Fairman, of Lyndonville, New York, spent some time at the Garden in August consulting the library and mycological herbarium.

Mr. B. O. Dodge, of Columbia University, collected fungi in Bermuda in August, and later visited Whitepost, Virginia, to obtain certain fleshy species.

Dr. C. L. Shear, of the Department of Agriculture at Washington, spent September 18 and 19 at the Garden, consulting the Ellis Collection of fungi.

Mr. Wilmer G. Stover has been appointed assistant professor of horticulture and botany in the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Oklahoma.

Dr. Gertrude S. Burlingham spent the summer near West Wardsboro, Vermont, continuing her study of the genus *Russula* for North American Flora.

Dr. Bruce Fink, professor of botany at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, spent most of August and a part of September at the Garden, continuing his studies of North American lichens.

According to Pantànnelli, *Diaporthe parasitica* has been successfully inoculated into Italian chestnuts, and the strictest quarantine regulations have been recommended to prevent the introduction of this parasite into Italy.

Among the principal diseases of sugar cane considered by L. C. and A. Maublanc in a recent series of articles, *Schizophyllum commune*, *Marasmius Sacchari*, and *Ithyphallus impudicus* occupy an important place.

Through the experiments of Bonnier, Matruchot, and Combes (Compt. Rend. 152: 652-659. 1911), it has been demonstrated that the air of forests contains nearly three hundred times as many spores of fungi as of bacteria, and that at high altitudes the number of spores of all kinds present in the air is much reduced.

A canker of the chestnut in southern Europe somewhat similar to that caused by *Diaporthe parasitica* in America, is claimed by Briosi and Farneti to be due to *Melanconis perniciosa*, which, according to these authors, is distinct from *Melanconis modonia* causing black canker of the chestnut in Brittany.

P. Vuillemin has called attention to a minute fungus, *Cicinobolus Cesatii Euonymi*, which is parasitic on the oak oidium in the forests of France, and suggests that this prevalent disease may be held in check elsewhere by the introduction of the parasite. The oidium has been abundant in the eastern United States in recent years.

Dr. W. A. Murrill visited Stockbridge, Massachusetts, on September 4 and 5, and returned with a large number of fleshy fungi, collected with the assistance of Dr. W. Gilman Thompson and Mr. Hoffmann. The invasion of the chestnut canker at several points in the vicinity of Stockbridge was also investigated and specimens of infected branches secured.

A disease of plum trees known as "silver-leaf," caused by *Stereum purpureum*, has been investigated quite thoroughly in England by the Duke of Bedford and S. U. Pickering, who claim that the discoloration of the leaves is due to their cells becoming partially disconnected, owing to disturbance in nutrition by poisons formed by the growing fungus. No satisfactory treatment has been discovered.

Dr. H. D. House, of the Biltmore Forest School, has done considerable collecting the past season in Michigan and Oregon.

Fleshy fungi have been scarce, but a number of interesting woody forms have been found and studied in relation to their hosts. Dr. House remarks in a recent letter from Oregon that "except for *Ganoderma oregonense* and *Echinodontium tinctorium*, the woody fungi and wood-destroying fungi do not appear to differ much from those in the East, the same species being common."

The report of the state botanist, Dr. C. H. Peck, for 1910 is a pamphlet of 86 pages and 6 colored plates, containing descriptions of 22 new species of New York fungi and 31 new fungi from other states. *Boletus albus*, *Cantharellus aurantiacus*, *Lactarius camphoratus*, *Lactarius lignyotus*, and *Lycoperdon atropurpureum* are figured and described at length in continuation of a list of edible fungi. Among notes on species, *Clitocybe dealbata sudorifica* is described as causing profuse perspiration, having been used by Mr. Howland, of Saratoga Springs, to break up a cold. Very serviceable descriptive lists of the New York species of *Hypholoma* and *Psathyra* conclude this excellent report. Dr. Peck has been assisted in its preparation by Mr. S. H. Burnham.

The recent epidemic of mushroom poisoning, during which about thirty persons lost their lives within a few weeks in the vicinity of New York City alone, was undoubtedly due to the prevalence of the white form of the deadly amanita, or "destroying angel," in the groves and woodlands of this region. After the heavy and continued rains of the last week in August, following a prolonged drought, mushrooms of many kinds sprang up in great quantity, the white form of the deadly amanita being conspicuous because of its color and large size, as well as because of its abundance.

The fatalities were mainly among the ignorant and foreign-born, who, to my personal knowledge, often collect everything they find in the form of a fleshy mushroom as they scour a piece of woodland, at times leaving behind them the "cups" of the poisonous species imbedded in the soil. These same persons not only eat the specimens themselves, but also sell them to shopkeepers and share them with their friends. The white form of

Amanita phalloides, especially when young and broken away from its swollen base, does not appear so very different to these collectors from the common field mushroom, *Agaricus campestris*, which is often pure white above and has its vivid pink gills hidden from sight by the veil in the younger stages. The two species are, however, very widely distinct, and persons incapable of distinguishing them would do well to abandon at once the rôle of mycophagist.